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Mr. Alan Lomax
215 West 98th Street
Apartment 12E
New York NY 10025

Dear Alan:

I am extremely pleased that you will be able to lend us the benefit of your considerable experience and expertise in ethnomusicology in the production of the Voyager record.

Voyager I and Voyager II are unmanned deep space probes which will be launched from Cape Canaveral in August and September, 1977. Their mission is to examine close-up the major planets, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus, their 20 some odd moons, and the rings of Saturn and Uranus. After these fly-by observations are performed, the two spacecraft will be ejected from the solar system, becoming mankind's third and fourth interstellar space vehicles. The first two such vehicles, Pioneers 10 and 11, were launched some six years ago and contain a 6 x 9 inch gold anodized aluminium plaque on which is etched some simple scientific information about the location of the Earth and the solar system in the Milky Way Galaxy, and the moment in the ten billion year history of our Galaxy when the spacecraft was launched. There are also drawings of a man and woman. The plaques were a sort of message in a bottle, cast into the cosmic ocean, in case at some remote epoch in the future an extraterrestrial civilization were to come upon Pioneer 10 or 11 and wonder something about its origin.

Voyager permits us to continue on the Pioneer 10 and 11 experience, but in a much richer way. When NASA asked me to chair a committee to decide what should be the nature of the Voyager cosmic greeting card, it soon became clear that much more information could be conveyed in the same space on a metal mother of a phonograph record than on a plaque of the same size. Since this is the 100th anniversary of Edison's invention of the phonograph, a record seems particularly apt. NASA will be launching on each Voyager a bonded pair of copper mothers containing the equivalent of four sides of a 12-inch 33-1/3 rpm long playing record. One of these sides will contain digital scientific information -- largely diagrams and pictures; a range of human voices, including some especially prepared at the United Nations and one special greeting by Kurt Waldheim, the U.N. Secretary General; and a selection of non-musical, non-vocal sounds of

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the Earth. The other three sides are devoted entirely to music -- music representative of all of humanity and music which represents the best of humanity. We believe that public availability of a two-record album identical in content with the flight record will stimulate listeners to examine our civilization and culture and consider how we wish to be represented to the Cosmos. In addition, it may be for many people a first exposure to some of the diversity and quality of human music.

Under its protective cover the flight record will have a probable lifetime of a billion years. It is unlikely that many other artifacts of humanity will survive for so prodigious a period of time; it is clear, for example, that most of the present continents will be ground down and dissipated by then. Inclusion of the musical selections on the Voyager record ensures for them a kind of immortality which could not be achieved in any other way.

We would like you to be a member of the final musical selection committee and are very pleased that we will have access to some selections from your unique collection of ethnic music. In each case we will need a release from the copyright holder. We feel we have an obligation in return for your important assistance to prominently acknowledge that assistance. We will be sure to include your name and affiliation in the draft of any NASA press release about the record. (We expect such releases around the time of launch in late August.) I would also like to invite you to prepare a few paragraphs for the commercial record liner or booklet, and -- if there is a book on the Voyager record -- to consider preparing all or part of a chapter on the rationale and significance of the particular selection of ethnic music which we will have made. I am enclosing a small token of my esteem.

With all good wishes,

Cordially,



Carl Sagan
Chairman
Voyager Record Committee

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